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**File Code:** 1950  
**Date:** December 20, 2017

Dear Interested Party:

The Forest Service is proposing the Yuba Trails Enhancement Project to: (1) re-route four motorized trail segments; (2) remove three existing unauthorized routes; and (3) construct a short connector motorized trail on National Forest System lands on the Yuba River Ranger District of the Tahoe National Forest. These actions are needed to address ongoing soil erosion and potential water quality impacts associated with existing steep, motorized trails and unauthorized routes in this area. The proposed actions would address soil erosion and water quality concerns, provide for a sustainable trail system, improve motorized recreation opportunities, and enhance trail users' experiences.

The Project area is located north of the community of Downieville (T 20 & 21N, R10E & R11E, multiple sections) and entirely within Sierra County. The four proposed motorized trail re-routes and three unauthorized route removals are located within the East and West Yuba Inventoried Roadless Areas. The proposed motorized connector trail lies outside the Inventoried Roadless Areas. (Please refer to the enclosed map.)

## **PURPOSE AND NEED**

Over the past several years, motorized recreational use has been steadily increasing in the Project area. This use has created localized impacts for both recreation users and natural resources, including deteriorating conditions of system trails, adverse watershed and soil impacts, and concerns regarding recreational experiences.

The purposes of the Yuba Trails Enhancement Project are to: respond to resource impacts from increasing and changing demands for motorized trail use and other motorized dispersed recreation; ensure the managed trail system is sustainable; and enhance motorized recreation experiences. Implementation of the Project would result in enhanced recreation opportunities and experiences; provide additional outfitter and guiding opportunities; mitigate existing impacts to soil and water resources; and address community interests and public safety. The proposed Project is consistent with Forest Plan management direction in the *Tahoe National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan* (1990) as amended by the *Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment Record of Decision* (SNFPA ROD 2004).

## **PROPOSED ACTION**

The proposed action has three components: (1) four motorized trail re-routes followed by subsequent decommissioning and restoration of the replaced trail sections; (2) removal of three existing unauthorized routes through restoration to a natural state; and (3) construction of a short connector motorized trail.



## Trail Re-Routes

The four proposed motorized trail reroutes are designed to eliminate problems associated with overly steep and heavily eroding portions of the Rattlesnake/Downie River Trail, Pauley Creek Trail, Big Boulder Trail, and Lavezzola Trail as follows:

**Downie River / Rattlesnake Trail** : The Project would re-route approximately 1.5-miles of the steep existing Rattlesnake trail segment (25-40% grades) that is intercepting a drainage, and replace it with an approximately 2.5 miles of multiple use motorized single track trail with a grade of 5-10%. With the proposed re-route, the entire trail length will be called the Downie River Trail. The Project would decommission and restore to natural grade the existing 1.5-mile steep section of trail (25-40% grades).

**Pauley Creek Trail** : The Project would re-route approximately 0.5 miles of a steep existing trail segment (25-35% grades) that climbs straight up and replace it with approximately 0.5 miles of multiple use motorized single track trail with grades of 5-10%. The Project would decommission and restore to natural grade 0.5 miles of a steep existing section of trail (25-35% grades).

**Lavezzola Trail**: The Project would re-route approximately 2 miles of a steep existing trail segment (25-40% grades) that climbs straight up and replace it with approximately 3 miles of multiple use motorized single track trail with grades of 5-10%. The Project would decommission and restore to natural grade the 2-mile steep existing section of trail (25-40% grades).

**Big Boulder Trail**: The Project would re-route approximately 1 mile of a steep existing trail segment (25-40% grades) that climbs straight up and replace it with approximately 1 mile of multiple use motorized single track trail with grades of 5-10%. The Project would decommission and restore to natural grade the 1-mile steep existing section of trail (25-40% grades).

## Connector Trail

**Second Divide Trail**: This proposed 0.15-mile connector trail is designed to enhance the safety and experience of users on First, Second and Third Divide Trails by building a trail that bypasses the County Road that connects the two popular trails. Currently a legal connection for motorcycle users does not exist as green sticker motorcycles are not allowed on roads not classified for their use under the *Tahoe National Forest Motorized Travel Management Record of Decision* (September 2010). This connector trail would also improve the user experience by creating a continuous single track trail that extends Second Divide Trail with a connection to First Divide Trail. The new multiple use motorized single track trail would be designed with grades of 5-10%.

## Unauthorized Route Restoration

The unauthorized route to Sisson Mine, an unauthorized route near Hawley Meadow (old Gold Valley), and unauthorized route near Butcher Ranch would be removed and the land restored to a natural grade. These routes are not needed for public use and are unsustainable. Approximately 3 miles of unauthorized routes would be restored to natural conditions.

Detailed information about this project is available by contacting Paul Hart, Assistant Public Service Officer (Trails) and Project Interdisciplinary Team Leader, Tahoe National Forest, Yuba River Ranger District, 15924 Hwy 49, Camptonville, CA 95922; (530) 478-6253.

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

The Tahoe National Forest is seeking public input on this proposal. If you have information that is specific to this proposed action that you feel the Forest Service may not be aware of, or feel you have issues (points of dispute, debate, or disagreement) regarding potential effects of the proposed actions, please submit your comments either electronically to: [comments-pacificsouthwest-tahoe-yuba-river@fs.fed.us](mailto:comments-pacificsouthwest-tahoe-yuba-river@fs.fed.us) or by mail to Dennis Stevens or Paul Hart at the address above.

Please submit your comments within 30 days after publication of the scoping legal notice in Grass Valley's *The Union* newspaper. This project is subject to 36 CFR 218 *Project-level Predecisional Administrative Review Process* (Parts A and B); hence, individuals and entities who submit timely, specific written comments regarding this proposed project during any designated opportunity for public comment (including this 30-day period) may file an objection. Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection. Your comments will be addressed in the environmental document that the Interdisciplinary Team will be developing over the next several months.

If you do not wish to comment but would like to follow the development of this project proposal, please let us know in writing by the above mentioned date. Submitted comments and/or addresses will be used to develop a list of interested persons for future mailings. If we do not hear from you, we will not be able to include you on the mailing list to be subsequently developed for this specific project.

Thank you your interest in the management of the Tahoe National Forest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ELI ILANO', with a stylized, flowing script.

ELI ILANO  
Forest Supervisor

Enclosure: Map of the Yuba Trails Enhancement Project Proposed Action